

Analysis of greyhound racing injuries

1 July – 30 September 2024



Foreword

The NSW Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission has published data since 2018 about injuries sustained by greyhounds while racing in NSW.

Reports are published:

- Quarterly, providing timely updates
- Annually, providing analysis of long-term trends

The Commission adopted a nationally agreed convention for classifying injuries in 2022 which can be viewed [here](#).

Together, these reports contribute to a growing body of evidence which can assist the industry in making evidence-based decisions with the aim of reducing the incidence and severity of greyhound racing injuries.

In keeping with this, in February 2023, the Commission convened a Summit comprising all key greyhound racing industry stakeholders to develop strategies for reducing serious racing injuries.

As a result of the Summit, the NSW Greyhound racing industry has committed itself to piloting a range of race injury reduction strategies. Those strategies and the timeframes for implementation are set out within the industry's Race Injury Reduction Action Plan. A copy of the Plan can be found at: <https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/welfare/race-injury-reduction-action-plan>

The Commission will publish the statistical results of the pilots conducted.

** This report may be republished with slight adjustments to figures after further auditing of data.*

Key comments

- Category E is at an all-time low for the third quarter in a row, continuing a long-term decline which has accelerated since the introduction of the Greyhound Care Scheme 2.0¹ by GRNSW in July 2023.
- Euthanasias off track due to a serious racing injury are being closely monitored to assess the effects of the Greyhound Care Scheme 2.0.
- Injury rates for categories A, C and D are slightly lower than in the July-September quarter last year, and this is the second quarter in a row that has shown long-term decline in total and serious injury rates.
- Of the 42 serious injuries (Category F) evaluated by the Race Injury Review Panel this quarter, 33 occurred on turns.

¹ See <https://www.grnsw.com.au/news/2023-07-01/grnsw-greyhound-care-scheme-2-0-launches> for further information about the Greyhound Care Scheme 2.0.

Key data

Injuries sustained at race meetings.

Table 1: Injuries at race meetings this quarter					
REPORTING PERIOD		1 July – 30 September 2024			
Race meetings					323
Races					3641
Starts (times a greyhound has started a race)					26598
Individual greyhounds raced					4619
Average starts per greyhound					5.8
Injury category	Incapacitation period (days)	Number of injuries	% injured per injury category	Cumulative total of injury category	Injuries per 1,000 starts
Category A	none	122	12%	12%	4.6
Category B	3-10	395	39%	51%	14.9
Category C	11 - 27	270	27%	78%	10.2
Category D	28 - 90	224	22%	99.6%	8.4
Category E	Euthanased/died	4	0.4%	100%	0.2
Total		1015			38.2
Category F	*	73			2.7
Category G	+	942			35.4

* Category F includes all Category E incidents as well as those within Category D that are deemed to be of a particularly serious nature. Please refer to [Standards for reporting greyhound racing injuries](#) further information.

+ Category G Includes any injury in Categories A to C and those in Category D that do not fit the definition of a serious injury (i.e. Category F).

Track-related mortality not at race meeting

GWIC veterinarians follow up with trainers about the outcomes for greyhounds which have suffered a serious Category D race injury.

Instances of euthanasia by a private veterinarian or sudden death away from the racetrack, after sustaining injury at a race meeting, are counted as Category D injuries in the table above and included in Table 2 below.

More information on greyhounds medically euthanased away from the racetrack can be found in the Commission's quarterly Greyhound Life Cycle Report, which is available on the Commission's website.

Table 2: Track related mortality not as part of race meeting	
Reporting Period	1 July – 30 September 2024
Reported euthanased by private veterinarian or death as a result of injury at race meeting	6
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in unofficial trial at racetrack	0
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in official trial at racetrack	0

Trends

Controlled for seasonal variation.

Injury rates are correlated with season, with hotter quarters 1 and 4 in each year usually having higher injury rates than cooler quarters 2 and 3. Comparing this quarter’s data with the same quarter in previous years reduces the influence of season and provides a more accurate picture of long-term trends in injury rates.

Note: reporting prior to Q3 2018 was by GRNSW and is not directly comparable due to differences in data definitions and recording.

Figure 1: Injury trends for same seasonal quarter - Categories A to E and total

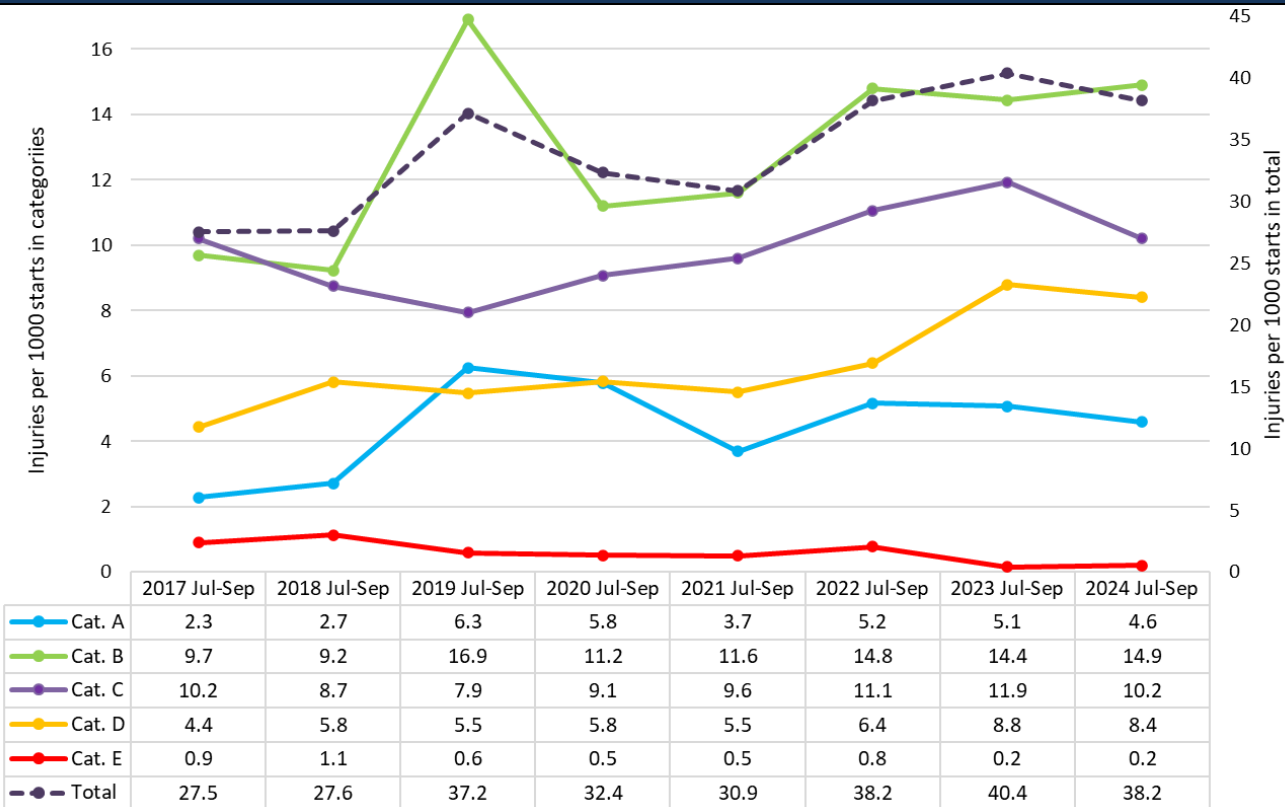


Figure 2: Injury trends for same seasonal quarter – Categories F and G

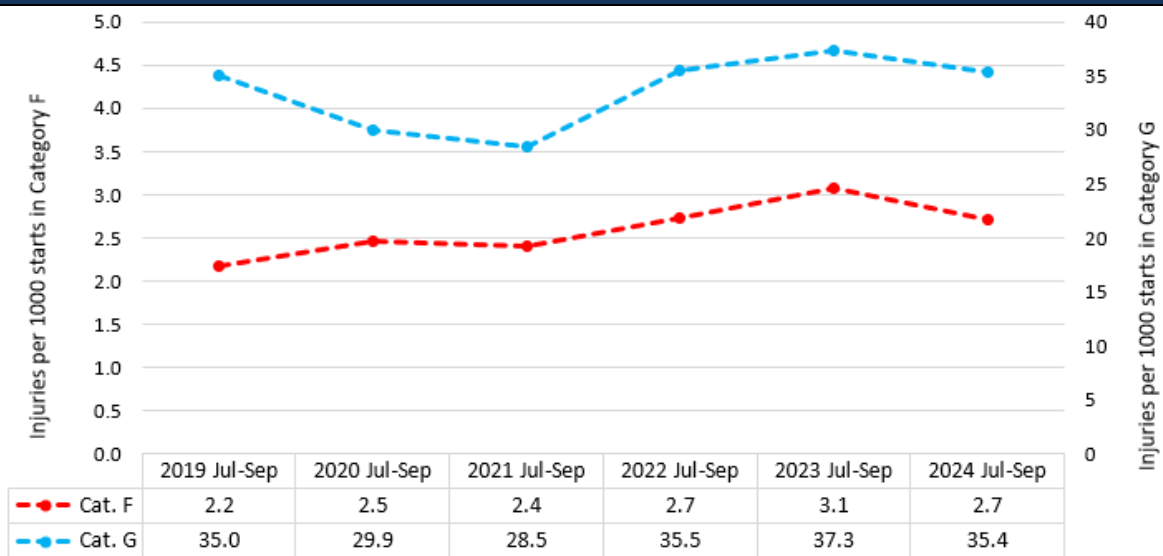


Table 3: This quarter compared to the same quarter in previous years

Injury type	This quarter compared to same quarter in previous years
Category A	Rate has declined slightly compared to previous two years and is similar to the 5-year average of 4.9.
Category B	Rate has remained stable compared to previous two years but is higher than the 5 year average of 13.4
Category C	Rate has declined compared to last two year and is similar to the 5-year average of 10.4.
Category D	Rate is similar to the 8-year high that occurred last year.
Category E	Rate is similar to the 8-year low that occurred last year.
Total	Similar to the previous two years.
Category F	Lower than last year and same as the 5-year average.
Category G	Similar to the previous two years but lower than the highest in 2023.
Comment	
Categories C and D and total injuries show modest and welcomed declines after peaking in the July-September quarter in 2023.	

Long-term trends

Long-term injury trends are presented as 12-month running averages (Figures 3 and 4).

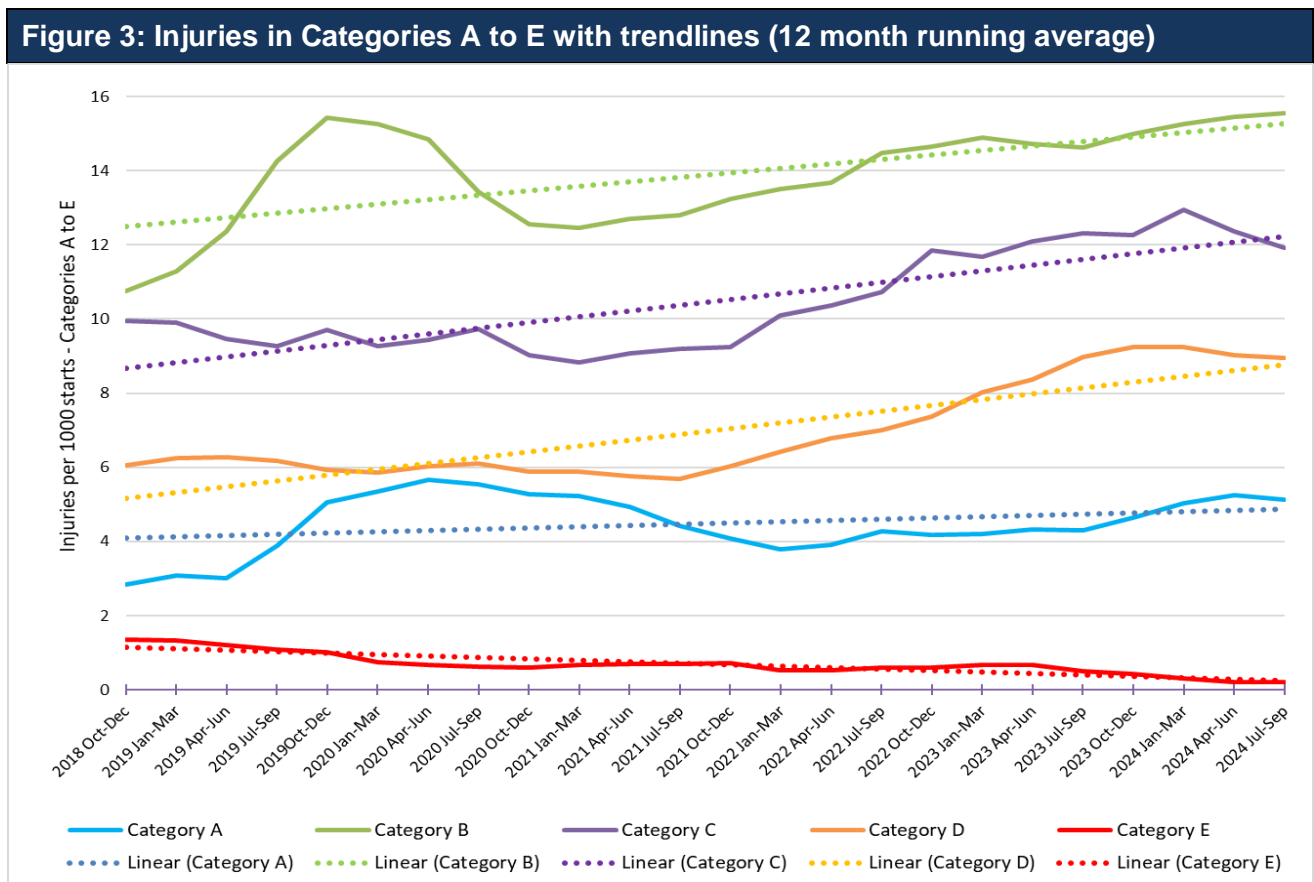


Figure 4: Injuries in Categories F, G and total with trendlines (12 month running average)

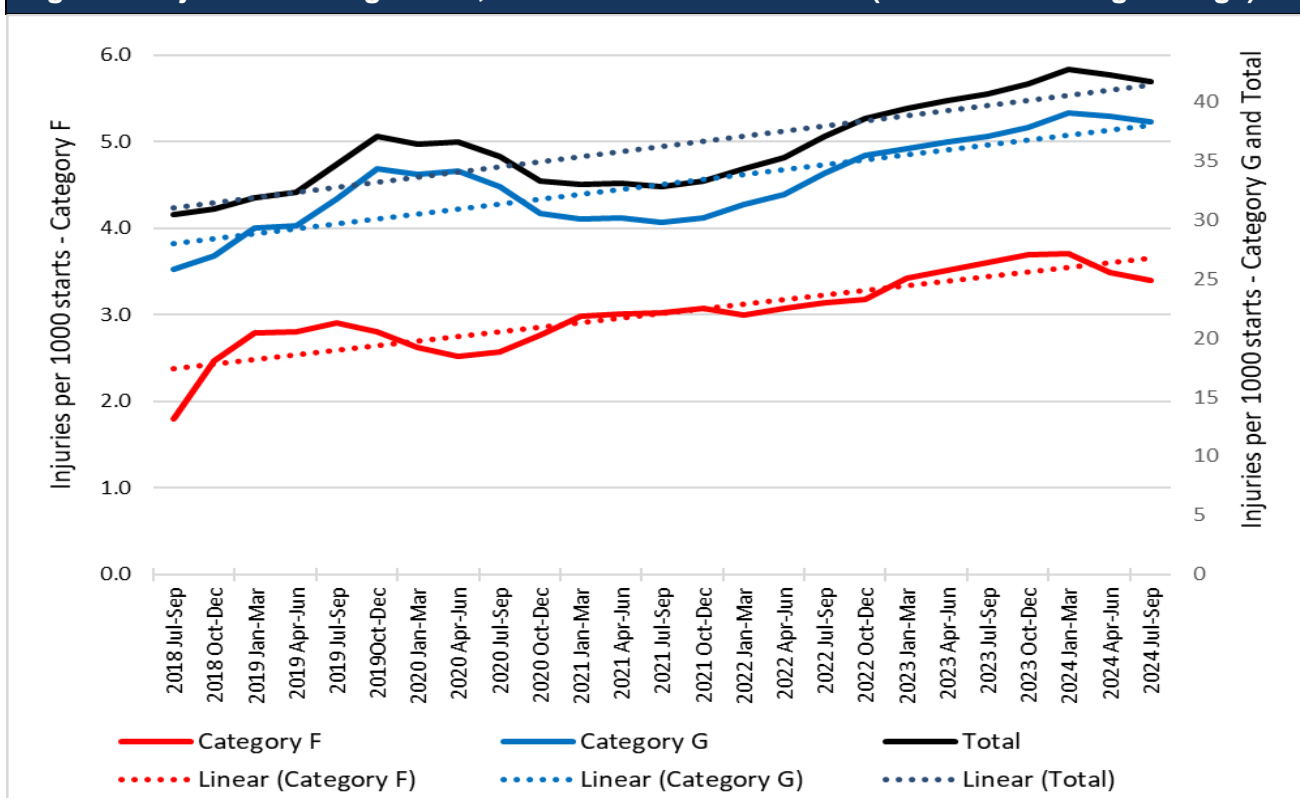


Table 4: This quarter relative to long term trends (12 months running average)

Category A	The running average shows a slight decrease this quarter.
Category B	This quarter continues the steady increase begun in early 2021.
Category C	Declined for the second quarter in a row in a long-term pattern of erratic growth.
Category D	Declined for the second quarter in a row after an all-time peak at the start of 2024.
Category E	At an all-time low this and last quarter, consistent with a long-term decline.
Total	Declined for the second quarter in a row in a long-term pattern of erratic growth.
Category F	Declined for the second quarter in a row in a long-term pattern of erratic growth.
Category G	Declined for the second quarter in a row in a long-term pattern of erratic growth.
Comment	
Category E is the only category to show consistent long-term decline, which has accelerated in the last 12 months. While categories C and D show average decline in 2024, in the long term they and Category B show similar rates of increase. Category A show a weak increase.	

Race Injury Review Panel Analysis

There are many causes of injuries in racing greyhounds and the relative importance and interactions of causative factors vary. Causative factors can be divided into:

1. **Greyhound factors:** genetics, nutrition, physical growth and development, fitness, race preparation, racing form and previous injury history.
2. **Track factors:** design and surface characteristics; environmental influences.
3. **Race factors:** race distance, racing incidents (collisions) and number of greyhounds in a race.

Category E and F injuries which occurred during this quarter were reviewed by the Race Injury Review Panel, continuing work begun in February 2019. The Panel assesses factors that may have contributed to each injury and where possible attributes it to greyhound, track, or race factors. Over time, the data collected will assist in informing prevention strategies and regulatory steps aimed at minimising the incidence of racing injuries.

Table 5 summarises the results of Panel deliberations and data for this quarter. Of the 73 Category F injuries this quarter, 68 were considered in full or part by the RIRP. In some instances, more than one factor may contribute to an injury, such as track and race factors. Where insufficient evidence is available (such as in trials or races where no video footage is available), the possible contributions to the injury are not considered by the Panel, but those greyhounds may be included in counts of the gender, age, distance, location, and race history of injured greyhounds.

Table 5: Review of Category E and F injuries this quarter			
	Category E	Category F minus Category E	Category F
Race Injury Review Panel assessment of contributing factors to injuries			
Greyhound factors	-	8	8
Race factors	1	41	42
Track factors	-	0	0
Factors not assessed	3	23	26
Gender of injured greyhound			
Female	2	27	29
Male	2	37	39
Age of injured greyhound to nearest 6 months			
1.5 years	0	1	1
2 years	2	10	12
2.5 years	1	20	21
3 years	0	13	13
3.5 years	1	12	13
4 years	0	7	7
4.5 years	0	1	1
> 5 years	0	0	0
Distance of race in which greyhound was injured			
Under 300m	0	3	3
300-399m	3	24	27
400-499m	0	22	22
500-600m	1	13	14
Over 600m	0	4	4
Location on track at which injury appears to have occurred			
Soon after start	0	1	1
Straight	0	2	2
Turn	0	33	33
After finish but before catching pen	0	3	3
Catching pen	1	2	3
Other			
Race history of injured greyhounds			
Average and range of starts in last 30 days	1.5 (1 - 2)	2.6 (0 - 6)	2.6 (0 - 6)
Average and range of starts in last 60 days	3.3 (3 - 4)	5.3 (0 - 11)	5.1 (0 - 11)
Average and range of career starts	13.8 (4 - 35)	32.9 (1 - 118)	31.8 (1 - 118)